

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 00603 141840Z

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SUBJECT: LABOR OPPOSES EARLY NATIONAL ELECTIONS

1. SUMMARY: ITALY'S THREE MAJOR LABOR CONFEDERATIONS, THROUGH THEIR TRI-CONFEDERATIONAL ORGANIZATION CGIL-CISL-UIL(CCU), HAVE COME OUT IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO THE HOLDING OF EARLY NATIONAL ELECTIONS. THE CCU REJECTED A SOCIALIST PROPOSAL FOR A NATIONAL STRIKE ON THE ISSUE AND, IN GENERAL, ADVOCATED FEWER STRIKES. THE CCU CONFERENCE ALSO ISSUED A TWELVE-POINT NATIONAL EMERGENCY PLAN WHICH IS BEING REPORTED SEPARATELY. END SUMMARY.

2. THE 90-MAN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE TRI-CONFEDERATIONAL ORGANIZATION CCU CONVENED ON JANUARY 12-13 TO FORMULATE POLICIES "CALLED FOR BY THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CRISES FACING THE COUNTRY." THE DOCUMENT WHICH EMERGED FROM THE INTENSIVE DISCUSSIONS PLACED ORGANIZED

LABOR STRONGLY IN OPPOSITION TO ANY CALL FOR EARLY NATIONAL ELECTIONS.

RATHER, THE CCU CALLED FOR AN IMMEDIATE RESOLUTION OF THE GOVERNMENTAL

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PAGE 02 ROME 00603 141840Z

CRISIS THROUGH THE FORMATION OF A GOVERNMENT DEDICATED TO

"SOLVING THE CRITICAL EXIGENCIES OF THE DAY."

3. THE CCU ISSUED A DETAILED TWELVE-POINT PROGRAM WHICH IT COMMENDED TO A NEW GOVERNMENT AS "A PROGRAM OF EMERGENCY." THIS PROGRAM WILL BE REPORTED SEPARATELY. IMPORTANT IN THIS CONNECTION IS THE FACT THAT IT DOES NOT, AS ADVOCATED BY THE SOCIALISTS, REJECT THE GOVERNMENT/LA MALFA PLAN, BUT RATHER SEEKS TO AUGMENT AND AMEND IT.

4. THE SOCIALISTS IN THE CCU, AS IN THE POLITICAL ARENA AT PRESENT, FOUND THEMSELVES OFFSIDE. THEY STRONGLY ENDORSED A PROPOSAL EMANATING FROM THE METAL WORKERS SECTOR FOR THE PROCLAMATION OF A 24 HOUR NATIONAL GENERAL STRIKE IN OPPOSITION TO EARLY ELECTIONS. THIS PROPOSAL WAS STAUNCHLY OPPOSED BY THE MAJORITY, NOTABLY BY THE THREE CONFEDERATION CHIEFS, LAMA, STORTI AND VANNI, WITH THE RESULT THAT THE CONFERENCE'S KEYNOTE SPEECH, DELIVERED BY THE CGIL SOCIALIST BONI, WAS WATERED DOWN BY CIANCAGLINI OF CISL AND QUERENGHI OF UIL. IN THE END, THE CCU THREW A SOP TO THE SOCIALIST PROPOSAL BY AGREEING TO "A DAY OF STRUGGLE" AGAINST EARLY ELECTIONS ON JANUARY 20, TAKING CARE TO POINT OUT THAT THIS "DAY OF STRUGGLE" WOULD BE RESTRICTED TO THE VARIOUS PLANTS AND FACTORIES CURRENTLY OCCUPIED BY WORKERS.

5. COMMENT: THE PREPONDERANT SENSE OF THE CCU CONVOCATION WAS A VERY MODERATE ONE. SEVERAL PROMINENT SPEAKERS POINTED TO THE NEED FOR FEWER STRIKES. CGIL CHIEF LAMA EMPHASIZED THE NEED TO GIVE TOP CONSIDERATION TO THE UNEMPLOYED, THOSE LAID OFF AND ON THE WAGE SUPPLEMENT FUND, THE YOUNG, NEW WORKERS AND THE PENSIONERS. IT WAS NOT DIFFICULT TO READ INTO THIS STATEMENT AN ADMONITION TO MODERATE WAGE DEMANDS. AS TO THE POSITION OF THE SOCIALISTS, THEY WERE ACCURATELY REFLECTING THE POSTURE OF THEIR PARTY. THOUGH THEY SUFFERED REBUFF, THE EFFECT OF THE EPISODE MAY WELL BE TO DRAW MORE CLOSELY TOGETHER THE SOCIALISTS IN THE CGIL AND THE UIL, AND THUS LESSEN THE SUBSERVIENCE OF THE CGIL SOCIALISTS TO THE COMMUNISTS.

6. LABOR'S UNAMBIGUOUS OPPOSITION TO EARLY ELECTIONS DERIVES FOR A LARGE PART FROM LABOR'S DESPERATE NEED FOR AN INTERLOCUTOR. WITHOUT A GOVERNMENT, THERE IS NOWHERE TO TURN FOR THE KIND OF MASSIVE GOVERNMENTAL INVESTMENTS WHICH LABOR FEELS IS REQUIRED BY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE CURRENT SITUATION; EARLY ELECTIONS WOULD, IN EFFECT, POSTPONE THE FORMATION OF AN EFFECTIVE NEW GOVERNMENT FOR TOO LONG A PERIOD OF TIME. IN ADDITION, THE CCU ELEMENTS WERE ALMOST PERFECTLY MIRRORING THE POSITIONS OF THE PARTIES WITH WHICH THEY ARE ASSOCIATED, AND ALL THE PARTIES ARE ON RECORD IN OPPOSITION TO EARLY NATIONAL ELECTIONS. VOLPE

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